

# **RULES AND PROCEDURES OF THE COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS**

## **U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, 109TH CONGRESS**

### **1. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

The Rules of the House of Representatives, and in particular the committee rules enumerated in rule XI, are the rules of the Committee on Small Business to the extent applicable and by this reference are incorporated. Each subcommittee of the Committee on Small Business (hereinafter referred to as the “committee”) is a part of the committee and is subject to the authority and direction of the committee, and to its rules to the extent applicable.

### **2. REFERRAL OF BILLS BY CHAIRMAN**

Unless retained for consideration by the full committee, all legislation and other matters referred to the committee shall be referred by the Chairman to the subcommittee of appropriate jurisdiction within 2 weeks. Where the subject matter of the referral involves the jurisdiction of more than one subcommittee or does not fall within any previously assigned jurisdictions, the Chairman shall refer the matter, as he may deem advisable.

### **3. DATE OF MEETING**

The regular meeting date of the committee shall be the *second Thursday* of every month when the House is in session. A regular meeting of the committee may be dispensed with if, in the judgment of the Chairman, there is no need for the meeting. Additional meetings may be called by the Chairman as he may deem necessary or at the request of a majority of the members of the committee in accordance with clause 2(c) of rule XI of the House.

At least 3 days notice of such an additional meeting shall be given unless the Chairman determines that there is good cause to call the meeting on less notice.

The determination of the business to be considered at each meeting shall be made by the Chairman subject to clause 2(c) of rule XI of the House.

A regularly scheduled meeting need not be held if there is no business to be considered or, upon at least 3 days notice, it may be set for a different date.

#### **4. ANNOUNCEMENT OF HEARINGS**

Unless the Chairman, with the concurrence of the ranking minority member, or the committee by majority vote, determines that there is good cause to begin a hearing at an earlier date, public announcement shall be made of the date, place and subject matter of any hearing to be conducted by the committee at least 1 week before the commencement of that hearing.

After announcement of a hearing, the committee shall make available as soon as practicable to all Members of the Committee a tentative witness list and to the extent practicable a memorandum explaining the subject matter of the hearing (including relevant legislative reports and other necessary material). In addition, the Chairman shall make available as soon as practicable to the Members of the Committee any official reports from departments and agencies on the subject matter as they are received.

#### **5. MEETINGS AND HEARINGS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

##### **(A) Meetings**

Each meeting of the committee or its subcommittees for the transaction of business, including the markup of legislation, shall be open to the public, including to radio, television and still photography coverage, except as provided by clause 4 of rule XI of the House, except when the committee or subcommittee, in open session and with a majority present, determines by record vote that all or part of the remainder of the meeting on that day shall be closed to the public because disclosure of matters to be considered would endanger national security, would compromise sensitive law enforcement information, or would tend to defame, degrade or incriminate any person or otherwise would violate any law or rule of the House; *Provided, however,* that no person other than members of the committee, and such congressional staff and such executive branch representatives as they may authorize, shall be present in any business meeting or markup session which has been closed to the public.

## **(B) HEARINGS**

Each hearing conducted by the committee or its subcommittees shall be open to the public, including radio, television and still photography coverage, except when the committee or subcommittee, in open session and with a majority present, determines by record vote that all or part of the remainder of the hearing on that day shall be closed to the public because disclosure of testimony, evidence or other matters to be considered would endanger the national security, would compromise sensitive law enforcement information, or would violate any law or rule of the House; *Provided, however*, that the committee or subcommittee may by the same procedure vote to close one subsequent day of hearings. Notwithstanding the requirements of the preceding sentence, a majority of those present, there being in attendance the requisite number required under the rules of the committee to be present for the purpose of taking testimony, (i) may vote to close the hearing for the sole purpose of discussing whether testimony or evidence to be received would endanger the national security, would compromise sensitive law enforcement information, or violate clause 2(k)(5) of rule XI of the House; or (ii) may vote to close the hearing, as provided in clause 2(k)(5) of rule XI of the House.

No member of the House may be excluded from non-participatory attendance at any hearing of the committee or any subcommittee, unless the House of Representatives shall by majority vote authorize the committee or subcommittee, for purposes of a particular series of hearings on a particular article of legislation or on a particular subject of investigation, to close its hearing to members by the same procedures designated for closing hearings to the public.

## **6. WITNESSES**

### **(A) Statement of Witnesses**

Each witness who is to appear before the committee or subcommittee shall file with the committee at least two business days before the day of his or her appearance, 100 copies of his or her written statement of proposed testimony. At least one copy of the statement of each witness shall be furnished directly to the ranking minority member. In addition, all witnesses shall be required to submit with their testimony a resume or other statement describing their education, employment, professional affiliations and other background information pertinent to their testimony unless waived by the Chairman.

Each witness shall also submit to the committee a copy of his or her final prepared statement in an electronic format no later than the day of the hearing unless waived by the Chairman.

The committee will provide public access to its printed materials, including the proposed testimony of witnesses, in electronic form.

### **(B) Interrogation of Witnesses**

Whenever any hearing is conducted by the committee or any subcommittee upon any measure or matter, the minority party members on the committee shall be entitled, upon request to the Chairman by a majority of those minority members, to call one witness selected by the minority to testify with respect to that measure or matter. The witness requested by the minority shall furnish at least one copy of his or her statement and any supplementary materials directly to the Chairman within two business days before the day of his or her appearance unless waived by the Chairman.

Except when the committee adopts a motion pursuant to subdivisions (B) and (C) of clause 2(j)(2) of rule XI of the rules of the House, committee members may question witnesses only when they have been recognized by the Chairman for that purpose, and only for a 5-minute period until all members present have had an opportunity to question a witness. The 5-minute period for questioning a witness by any one member can be extended only with the unanimous consent of all members present. The Chairman, followed by the ranking minority member and all other members alternating between the majority and minority, shall initiate the questioning of witnesses in both the full and subcommittee hearings.

In recognizing members to question witnesses, the Chairman may take into consideration the ratio of majority and minority members present in such a manner as not to disadvantage the Members of either party. The Chairman, in consultation with the ranking minority member, may decrease the 5-minute time period in order to accommodate the needs of all the Members present and the schedule of the witnesses.

## **7. SUBPEONAS**

A subpoena may be authorized and issued by the Chairman of the committee in the conduct of any investigation or series of investigations or activities to require the attendance and testimony of such witness and the production of such books, records, correspondence, memoranda, papers and documents, as he deems necessary. The ranking minority member shall be promptly notified of the issuance of such a subpoena.

Such a subpoena may be authorized and issued by the chairman of a subcommittee with the approval of a majority of the members of the subcommittee and the approval of the Chairman of the committee.

## **8. QUORUM**

No measure or recommendation shall be reported unless a majority of the committee was actually present. For purposes of taking testimony or receiving evidence, two members shall constitute a quorum. For all other purposes, one-third of the members (or 11 Members) shall constitute a quorum.

## **9. AMENDMENTS DURING MARK-UP**

Any amendment offered to any pending legislation before the committee must be made available in written form when requested by any member of the committee. If such amendment is not available in written form when requested, the Chairman shall allow an appropriate period for the provision thereof.

## **10. PROXIES**

No vote by any member of the committee or any of its subcommittees with respect to any measure or matter may be cast by proxy.

## 11. POSTPONEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS

The Chairman in consultation with the Ranking Minority Member may postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving any measure or matter or adopting an amendment. The Chairman may resume proceedings on a postponed request at any time. In exercising postponement authority, the Chairman shall take all reasonable steps necessary to notify members on the resumption of proceedings on any postponed recorded vote. When proceedings resume on a postponed question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

## 12. NUMBER AND JURISDICTION OF SUBCOMMITTEES

There will be four subcommittees as follows:

**Workforce, Empowerment and Government Programs** (seven Republicans and six Democrats)

**Regulatory Reform and Oversight** (seven Republicans and six Democrats)

**Rural Enterprises, Agriculture and Technology** (six Republicans and five Democrats)

**Tax, Finance and Exports** (eight Republicans and seven Democrats)

During the 109th Congress, the Chairman and ranking minority member shall be *ex officio* members of all subcommittees, without vote, and the full committee shall have the authority to conduct oversight of all areas of the committee's jurisdiction.

In addition to conducting oversight in the area of their respective jurisdiction, each subcommittee shall have the following jurisdiction:

## **WORKFORCE, EMPOWERMENT AND GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS**

Oversight and investigative authority over problems faced by small businesses in attracting and retaining a high quality workforce, including but not limited to wages and benefits such as health care.

Promotion of business growth and opportunities in economically depressed areas.

Oversight and investigative authority over regulations and other government policies that impact small businesses located in high risk communities.

Opportunities for minority, women, veteran and disabled-owned small businesses, including the SBA's 8(a) program.

General oversight of programs targeted toward urban relief.

Small Business Act, Small Business Investment Act, and related legislation.

Federal Government programs that are designed to assist small business generally.

Participation of small business in Federal procurement and Government contracts.

## **REGULATORY REFORM AND OVERSIGHT**

Oversight and investigative authority over the regulatory and paperwork policies of all Federal departments and agencies.

Regulatory Flexibility Act.

Paperwork Reduction Act.

Competition policy generally.

Oversight and investigative authority generally, including novel issues of special concern to small business.

## **RURAL ENTERPRISES, AGRICULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY**

Promotion of business growth and opportunities in rural areas.

Oversight and investigative authority over agricultural issues that impact small businesses.

General oversight of programs targeted toward farm relief.

Oversight and investigative authority for small business technology issues.

## **TAX, FINANCE AND EXPORTS**

Tax policy and its impact on small business.

Access to capital and finance issues generally.

Export opportunities and oversight over Federal trade policy and promotion programs.

### **13. COMMITTEE STAFF**

#### **(A) Majority Staff**

The employees of the committee, except those assigned to the minority as provided below, shall be appointed and assigned, and may be removed by the Chairman. The Chairman shall fix their remuneration, and they shall be under the general supervision and direction of the Chairman.

#### **(B) Minority Staff**

The employees of the committee assigned to the minority shall be appointed and assigned, and their remuneration determined, as the ranking minority member of the committee shall determine.

### **(C) Subcommittee Staff**

The Chairman and ranking minority member of the full committee shall endeavor to ensure that sufficient staff is made available to each subcommittee to carry out its responsibilities under the rules of the committee.

## **14. POWERS AND DUTIES OF SUBCOMMITTEES**

Each subcommittee is authorized to meet, hold hearings, receive evidence, and report to the full committee on all matters referred to it. Subcommittee chairmen shall set meeting and hearing dates after consultation with the Chairman of the full committee. Meetings and hearings of subcommittees shall not be scheduled to occur simultaneously with meetings or hearings of the full committee.

## **15. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **(A) Investigative Hearings**

The report of any subcommittee on a matter which was the topic of a study or investigation shall include a statement concerning the subject of the study or investigation, the findings and conclusions, and recommendations for corrective action, if any, together with such other material as the subcommittee deems appropriate.

Such proposed reports shall first be approved by a majority of the subcommittee members. After such approval has been secured, the proposed report shall be sent to each member of the full committee for his or her supplemental, minority, or additional views.

Any such views shall be in writing and signed by the member and filed with the clerk of the full committee within 5 calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays) from the date of the transmittal of the proposed report to the members. Transmittal of the proposed report to members shall be by hand delivery to the members' offices.

After the expiration of such 5 calendar days, the report may be filed as a House report.

## **(B) End of Congress**

Each subcommittee shall submit to the full committee, not later than November 15 of each even-numbered year, a report on the activities of the subcommittee during the Congress.

## **16. RECORDS**

The committee shall keep a complete record of all actions, which shall include a record of the votes on any question on which a record vote is demanded. The result of each subcommittee record vote, together with a description of the matter voted upon, shall promptly be made available to the full committee. A record of such votes shall be made available for inspection by the public at reasonable times in the offices of the committee.

The committee shall keep a complete record of all committee and subcommittee activity which, in the case of any meeting or hearing transcript, shall include a substantially verbatim account of remarks actually made during the proceedings, subject only to technical, grammatical, and typographical corrections authorized by the person making the remarks involved.

The records of the committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available in accordance with rule VII of the Rules of the House. The Chairman of the full committee shall notify the ranking minority member of the full committee of any decision, pursuant to clause 3(b)(3) or clause 4(b) of rule VII of the House, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the committee for a determination of the written request of any member of the committee.

## **17. ACCESS TO CLASSIFIED OR SENSITIVE INFORMATION**

Access to classified or sensitive information supplied to the committee and attendance at closed sessions of the committee or its subcommittees shall be limited to members and necessary committee staff and stenographic reporters who have appropriate security clearance when the Chairman determines that such access or attendance is essential to the functioning of the committee.

The procedures to be followed in granting access to those hearings, records, data, charts, and files of the committee which involve classified information or information deemed to be sensitive shall be as follows:

(a) Only Members of the House of Representatives and specifically designated committee staff of the Committee on Small Business may have access to such information.

(b) Members who desire to read materials that are in the possession of the committee should notify the clerk of the committee.

(c) The clerk will maintain an accurate access log, which identifies the circumstances surrounding access to the information, without revealing the material examined.

(d) If the material desired to be reviewed is material which the committee or subcommittee deems to be sensitive enough to require special handling, before receiving access to such information, individuals will be required to sign an access information sheet acknowledging such access and that the individual has read and understands the procedures under which access is being granted.

(e) Material provided for review under this rule shall not be removed from a specified room within the committee offices.

(f) Individuals reviewing materials under this rule shall make certain that the materials are returned to the proper custodian.

(g) No reproductions or recordings may be made of any portion of such materials.

(h) The contents of such information shall not be divulged to any person in any way, form, shape, or manner, and shall not be discussed with any person who has not received the information in an authorized manner.

(i) When not being examined in the manner described herein, such information will be kept in secure safes or locked file cabinets in the committee offices.

(j) These procedures only address access to information the committee or a subcommittee deems to be sensitive enough to require special treatment.

(k) If a member of the House of Representatives believes that certain sensitive information should not be restricted as to dissemination or use, the member may petition the committee or subcommittee to so rule. With respect to information and materials provided to the committee by the executive branch, the classification of information and materials as determined by the executive branch shall prevail unless affirmatively changed by the committee or the subcommittee involved, after consultation with the appropriate executive agencies.

(l) Other materials in the possession of the committee are to be handled in accordance with the normal practices and traditions of the committee.

## **18. OTHER PROCEDURES**

The Chairman of the full committee may establish such other procedures and take such actions as may be necessary to carry out the foregoing rules or to facilitate the effective operation of the committee.

The committee may not be committed to any expense whatever without the prior approval of the Chairman of the full committee.

## **19. AMENDMENTS TO COMMITTEE RULES**

The rules of the committee may be modified, amended or repealed by a majority of the members, at a meeting specifically called for such purpose, but only if written notice of the proposed change has been provided to each such member at least 3 days before the time of the meeting.